

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22  
West Lancs Investment Centre  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T**01695 566855  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email** gail.hill@cfbt.com



27 March 2013

Mr Ian Railton  
Headteacher  
St Aidan's C of E Memorial Primary School  
Loyalty Road  
Hartlepool  
County Durham  
TS25 5BA

Dear Mr Railton

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St Aidan's C of E Memorial Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 27 March 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two other senior leaders, four members of the Governing Body and a phone conversation with a representative of the local authority. The school action plan and evidence from senior leaders monitoring of teaching and learning was evaluated

**Context**

Since the inspection one member of staff is on long term sickness absence, the Governing Body has appointed a new Chair and Vice Chair and has filled two governor vacancies but four vacancies remain.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher has put together an action plan linked to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. It contains actions which will bring about improvement, and timescales, but these are not linked to targets which can be measured by the governing body. The actions identified are not linked closely enough to improving pupils' progress in lessons and teachers do not yet have a clear understanding of what good progress in their class looks like because no numerical targets have been set with teachers.

Actions have been taken to improve teaching in mathematics and share good practice across the school; senior leaders are working alongside weaker teachers in a coaching model and some staff have visited a local outstanding school to observe teaching. A new system to track pupils' progress has been installed. The monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out by the headteacher and senior leaders do not have opportunities to get into classes, or take part in pupil progress meetings, to see for themselves what teaching and especially learning is like in their subjects; although they are keen to do so. The monitoring which has taken place since January is not yet sufficiently focused on the progress all pupil groups are making in lessons.

The new Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body have taken decisive action to improve the rigour with which they hold senior leaders to account. They have brokered the support of the National College of School Leadership and the local diocese to carry out a review of their practices. Governors have attended training in identifying their roles and responsibilities and in their ability to understand data on pupils' performance. The Chair has also formed two new committees and is ensuring that all committees meet more regularly. However, there still needs to be more rigour with regard to the timescale with which these actions are carried out.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that she visit the school again and that further action is taken to:

- revise the current action plan to include measurable targets, linked to pupils' progress which will help the governing body monitor the school and hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make in their classes
- broker support from the local authority to support senior leaders, and the headteacher, in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school; and ensure that senior leaders have management time to enable them to carry this out effectively
- as a matter of urgency, carry out a skills audit of the governing body to identify gaps and fill the vacant places.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the school well in developing teachers understanding of how to teach mathematics and problem solving, and in adopting a new system to better track pupils' progress. The diocese has supported the Governing Body in clearly identifying their roles and responsibilities and helped to fill some of the vacant posts.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Hartlepool.

Yours sincerely

Joy Frost

**Her Majesty's Inspector**